



Senator John McCain and Narender Reddy.

An Indian American Elector

By DEEPANJALI KAKATI

Narender Reddy, a Republican from the state of Georgia, served as an elector in the 2004 U.S. presidential elections. Founder and chairman of the Georgia Indian American Republican Council, Reddy says the opportunity was a surprise and an honor.

Georgia has 15 electoral votes and Reddy's name appeared on the ballot—a printed form with a small box to check and sign—along with the other electors, in small print below George W. Bush's name. Also, every polling station in the state had a huge poster with the electors' names on it.

Born in Nalgonda, Andhra Pradesh, Reddy moved to the United States in 1982 and became a citizen. He played an active role in the 2004 elections and served as the state vice chairman of the Bush-Cheney '04 campaign committee. He attended the 2004 Republican National Convention as a delegate from Georgia and the 2008 convention as an alternate delegate. A businessman, Reddy is also on the board of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority.

Reddy spoke to SPAN about his experience:

"When [then] State Republican Party chairman Alec Poitevint asked me to file my nomination to be an elector, I was pleasantly surprised. Knowing the importance of the Electoral College and the trustworthiness it requires from the elector, I felt it was an honor.

"On the day when Electoral College members [in every state and the national capital] are required to vote, we all met for breakfast organized by our party at the Ritz Carlton [in Atlanta, Georgia]. It was kind of a celebratory event for the party leadership to [meet] with the Electoral College members and thank them.

"We knew that we could vote a candidate of our choice and nothing is binding us to vote only for a certain party candidate. All [the] electors were trusted by the party leadership to vote for the party candidate only. But no one specifically told us at the breakfast meeting that it is mandatory or anything to that effect.

"Later, in a special coach, we were driven with a police escort to the State Capitol where Governor Sonny Perdue received us. We were seated in the General Assembly and cast our votes."



ELECTORAL COLLEGE